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He hath no power who hath  
not power to use, Festus.

(C'stendon)

NBI



# CONATA.

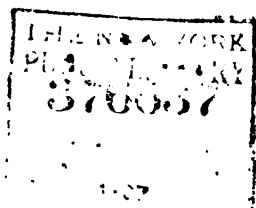
A COLLECTION OF POEMS.

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BY  
MARY GRANT O'SHERIDAN.

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MADISON, WIS.:  
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## APOLOGY.

---

E'en in the dullest lives comes oft an hour,  
Of pleasure exquisite, or agonizing pain;  
And thoughts and feelings far beyond the power  
Of language to express come crowding on the brain.

Who has not thrilled beneath Joy's warm embrace,  
Or felt the cold unsympathizing clasp of Grief?  
Who hath not sometime wearied in life's race,  
Or sought in vain to find from frightful fears relief?

Oh hours like these the portion are of all,  
And all will seek companionship in bliss or woe,  
Bedecked with bridal veil or funeral pall,  
We need our friends beside us as we come and go.

We need some kindred minds our thoughts to share,  
Lest they become a burden bearing down our hearts,  
We need true friendship, boon most bright and fair,  
Which given to our keeping once, it ne'er departs.

Within this book you'll find a faint attempt,  
To tell you of some thoughts and feelings I have known  
In random hours. Though not from fault exempt,  
Pray kindly read, compare and blend them with your own.

Knott's Feb 8/07. H. 50



Please return,

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	<i>Page.</i>
TO MY HEART, - - - - -	7
ON RECEIPT OF A LETTER, - - - - -	10
SHADOWS, - - - - -	11
FAREWELL TO '75, - - - - -	15
A ROSEBUD, - - - - -	17
THE DEATH OF BALDER, - - - - -	19
UNDER THE WILLOW ON THE BANK OF LAKE MONONA -	26
LINES, - - - - -	29
THE RUSTLING OF THE CORN, . - - - -	30
TO A FRIEND, - - - - -	33
MORNING GLORIES, - - - - -	35
INDEPENDENCE DAY, JULY 4, 1876, - - - -	36
NOW AND THEN, - - - - -	38
MARTHA WHALEN, - - - - -	41
WAITING, - - - - -	43
SUNBEAMS IN THE BROOK, - - - - -	45
FOR A FRIEND'S ALBUM, - - - - -	47
WEARY, - - - - -	48
TO MISS MARY COIT SPOONER, - - - - -	51
DAS GRAB, - - - - -	57
THE LITTLE BROKEN RING, - - - - -	59
SONNET, BY MICHAEL ANGELO, - - - - -	61
TO THE FAMILY OF A DECEASED FRIEND, - - -	62

	<i>Page.</i>
WELCOME TO PARNELL AND DILLON, - - -	65
COMING, - - - - -	67
TWO MAIDENS, - - - - -	68
THE PICNIC AT WESTPORT, - - - - -	70
AGAIN, - - - - -	74
TO HATTIE H., - - - - -	75
THE POEM OF LIFE, - - - - -	76
TO CARRIE KEENAN, - - - - -	77
TO C., - - - - -	78
TWO YEARS, - - - - -	79
THE COMING OF WINTER, - - - - -	81
LOST, - - - - -	83
ANOTHER YEAR. - - - - -	84
HOPE, - - - - -	86
MY THOUGHT, - - - - -	87
I WILL NOT FORGET, - - - - -	89
TO M. L., - - - - -	91
COMPLETENESS, - - - - -	95
IF ONLY, - - - - -	97
A REVERIE, - - - - -	98
TO MRS. M., - - - - -	100
LONGING, - - - - -	102

*TO MY HEART.*

Hast thou a wish, my heart? Wish not for fame.  
'Tis something so unlike thyself,  
'Tis what they think of thee who know thee least,  
'Tis what the world is pleased to say,  
Each one hath formed opinion for himself,  
And then he saith accordingly.

But none can ever know thee, heart,  
Oh, none can know thy labors, none can know  
Thy longings, thy desires and disappointments,  
Thy quickened, passionate beating  
When joy and love held revelry within thee;  
Or the slow weariness with which  
The moments wore away when joy had fled,  
And love, thy best and purest love, lay dead.  
Dear heart, they cannot, shall not know.

The inner chamber decked with flowers,  
Pale, snowy flowers of richest fragrance,  
And hung with draperies dark as anguish,  
That chamber where the treasure of thy thoughts  
Lies hidden from all gaze save that of God.  
Ah, who shall see or tell of that!

And as they measure out their praise or blame,  
And some, perchance, shall say "she shall have fame,"  
Oh, heed them not; they cannot judge aright  
That fame cannot but be a part of thee;  
That part least sacred, which thou darest show  
Unto the world. Wish not for fame.

Seek not content, my heart, seek not content,  
For if thou seekest it, 'twill ever flee;  
Feign to care not, but sing, and sing,  
Be merry all the day; sufficient scope  
Within the present moment thou canst find  
For many noble deeds of hand and brain,  
Oh, sit not down, and murmuring, look afar  
And sigh, "the fairest fields lie there,"  
Content dwells not upon those misty hills,  
Nor in those distant valleys green and wide.  
She makes no place her home, but, as she roams,  
Will sometimes come and kiss men's brows at night,  
When dipping, dipping through the clouds, the moon  
Seems fairly crazed with happiness,  
And stars shine out, like echoes of the day  
But just gone out with all earth's yesterdays  
Into oblivion, yet leaving still  
The rapture of its presence in all hearts.  
Such days shall dawn for all, dear, happy days,

Yet seek them not, nor seek content  
Which comes with them, my heart, which comes with  
them.

Be not ambitious, heart of mine,  
Build not thy hopes too high, lest they should fall  
And crush thee with their weight, and men should scorn  
Thy vanity, and mock thee for thy pains.  
O wish for peace, my heart, and seek for rest;  
Peace God-given, rest eternal, most complete.

(2)

*ON RECEIPT OF A LETTER.*

Welcome, little stranger white,  
I'll read thee first and then, good night,  
'Mong other missives kind and true  
I will reserve a place for you,  
And trusting memory through the years  
To come, will keep thee; smiles and tears  
Will alternate, and I will know my share of both,  
And I will take them, nothing loth,  
And in my heart of hearts say all is well,  
If thou to me the truth doth tell.



*SHADOWS.*

A beautiful vine o'er the window grew,  
And the evening sun shone brightly through;  
And, as spirits tread — unheard and fleet —  
The shadow-leaves in confusion sweet  
Fell down on the floor of a small, low room;  
And the wandering wind brought rare perfume  
It had snatched away from the blossoms red  
Of the clover fields, as it onward sped;  
And the cricket's chirp, and the frog's low croon,  
Seemed parts of a quaint and tender tune,  
Which, ever seeking to recall,  
Cricket and frog from spring to fall,  
Hum over the unforgotten notes,  
With unswerving will and untiring throats.

But within the room, where the shadows fell,  
Fell a deeper shade with a stronger spell  
O'er a youthful heart and its eager hope,  
Its fond desire with the world to cope;  
And the song that flowed from the parted lips,  
And the work that dropped from the finger-tips,  
Forevermore unfinished lay

In the fading light of that summer day;  
And Night came on, with peaceful rest  
To all who received her as welcome guest;  
And afar in the west, like a fiery ball,  
The sun sank back of the tree-tops tall.

And away, where the finite path of life  
Leads into the infinite, free from strife,  
From disappointment, doubt and care,  
And all the crosses which mortals bear;  
Where victory comes, though sad defeat  
Came oft before; and where joyful feet  
Walk trustfully in the perfect light,  
And where dim eyes see with perfect sight —  
There, where destinies meet and part,  
Death unheeded brought many a heart;  
And, a shadowy guide, he led them through  
The last of the old life, into the new.

And the heart that beat in the small, low room,  
Where the wandering wind brought sweet perfume,  
Fate showed to Death, and bade him bring  
Other tasks to do, other songs to sing.  
But the poor heart heeded not, nor knew  
The solemn bound it was speeding to,  
Nor thought its path so soon could end;  
For paths in June-time ever wend

'Neath skies of blue, and boughs of green;  
And everywhere the grass between  
Grow fairest types of faith and love —  
Sweet flowers, with hues caught from above,  
From sunset warm, or softest dawn,  
Calm skies from which all storm had gone;  
And who that roams in pleasant ways  
Looks off into the future's haze,  
And fears to see the trees turn brown  
But just a little farther down,  
And all the bloom that spring has made  
In midst of summer droop and fade?  
But oft it fades. We know not why  
Things thus before their time should die;  
Why young, warm hearts grow cold and still,  
Devoid of all life's quickening thrill;  
Why Nature builds to overthrow,  
And lays the frail, fair structure low  
Ere half perfected.

Over the hills hung drifting clouds,  
And wrapped them 'round with darkest shrouds;  
The wind was sad, and sighed,  
As quickly o'er the plain it hied;  
Chill was the air, and the rain  
Fell mournfully on the window pane.

And within the small, low room,  
Where once came the scent of the clover bloom,  
A white, white face near the window lay,  
Composed and still, in the dawning gray;  
And friends came there in the dreary hours,  
And filled the folded hands with flowers,  
And said she was so young — alas!  
Too young away from life to pass.  
And they kissed her one time more — the last —  
And bore her off through the rain and blast  
To a new-made grave, and laid her there,  
In the common home all mortals share.

*FAREWELL TO '75.*

I hear the ringing of many a bell,  
I hear the cannon mouthings loud,  
I see in the darkness of night a shroud,  
I hear in the ringing of bells a knell,  
I see the glimmer of stars so clear,  
Like tapers burning beside the bier  
    Of the old, old year.

The old year is dying, his moments are few,  
A sadness is cast over all the earth,  
As we think of the old year's birth,  
And the time when the old year was new,  
Eleven sounds fall on my ear,  
From a clock telling sure and clear,  
    The old year's death is near.

Another hour,— spend it not ill,  
For the angels in heaven its record shall keep,  
Another hour and the old year shall sleep,  
In memory's sepulcher cold and still,  
    And the new year bright,  
    O'er the still dark night,  
    Shall cast its light.

The clock strikes twelve, the old year is gone,  
It shall live no more, save in the past,  
And the shadow is lifted that o'er all was cast,  
And the voice of the new year says do not mourn,  
For the bells have rung,  
From their steeples hung,  
And the new year's greeting is sung.  
So let us rejoice in the new year given,  
And welcome the guest that is sent us from heaven.

*A ROSE-BUD.*

You gave to me a rose-bud red,  
    Long ago,  
And the days have since then fled,  
    Fast and slow.  
Some were bright and full of hope,  
Some have led me near the slope  
Of the precipice despair,  
Shutting out the wonted light,  
With draperies borrowed from the night  
Of weariness and world-sick care.

With a beauty soft and sweet,  
    Some came on,  
Fraught with pleasure most complete,  
    At the dawn.  
But when came the evening still,  
Sadness all my soul did fill;  
For, nor noon nor evening brought,  
That which seemed at morn so near,  
That which in the sunlight clear,  
Through the long day I had sought.

Others towards the close grew bright

Happy days!

Still the memory of their light,

With me stays.

Still my heart grows joyful when,

I live them o'er in dreams again;

Withered, scentless was my rose,

But I thought more buds will grow,

Winds of spring-time gently blow,

After storms and winter snows.

He will come to me again,

In the spring,

Roses fair and fragrant then,

He will bring.

"Dearest one" he'll say to me;

"I have brought them all for thee."

But the spring-time came and passed,

You came not to me, ah well,

Many things my heart could tell,

Of vows unkept and buds too sweet to last.



*THE DEATH OF BALDER.*

[DEDICATED TO PROF. R. B. ANDERSON.]

Where fierce and rugged Norway's mountains  
Reach up into the northern sky,  
And weird wild wells and sacred fountains  
Within the wondrous valleys lie,

Oh beauty, grandeur, might, majestic  
To Norway's landscape Nature gave,  
With hand beneficent and plastic,  
Formed fjord and fountain, cleft and cave.

The men who held this land their dower,  
A stern imaginative race,  
Were men with minds as full of power  
As grand as was their dwelling place.

And Norway's gods, the gods of Norsemen,  
Were warriors valliant, judges skilled,  
In war undaunted, gallant horsemen,  
Whose hearts with love and bravery thrilled.

And Norsemen's gods shall live in story  
As long as mortal hand can write,  
Or mortal hearts their ancient glory,  
Their bravery and fame delight.

In Briedablik (broad-shining splendor),  
Dwelt Balder, he of gods the best,  
In beauty more divinely tender,  
More eloquent than all the rest.

So dazzling fair in form and features  
Light radiated from his brow;  
Fair far beyond all breathing creatures,  
All gods to whom those creatures bow.

He was the son of mighty Odin,  
Chief god of all the gods who reign;  
Who Hlidskjalf, high and grand, abode in,  
With spear and wolves and ravens twain.

Balder, the good, beloved by many,  
For grave and wise were all his ways,  
Deserving not the hate of any,  
But meriting their love and praise.

Balder, the good, asleep, fell dreaming  
Of sights most terrible and strange,  
Voices and words with terror teeming,  
And each foretelling death and change.

Balder, to all the gods assembled,  
Then told his dream of peril great;  
And they all with sorrow trembled,  
Fearing for their favorite's fate.

Then Balder's mother did solicit  
All things that they would harm him not;  
And vows and promises explicit  
Of friendliness from all she got.

But Odin's grief would not be banished,  
Something defective seemed to him;  
The power of the gods seemed vanished,  
The light of Nature growing dim.

Sleipner, of all fleet steeds the fleetest,  
To Niflheim then Odin rode,  
And singing magic songs the sweetest,  
For dangers him did still forebode.

Odin, as Vegtam all disguised,  
Rode to the eastern gate of Hel,  
And there the prophetess surprised  
With potent runes and mystic spell.

Then she arose, and to him speaking,  
Said, Why comest thou to waken me?  
What in the future art thou seeking?  
What wouldst thou have me tell to thee?

Tell me for whom those costly couches  
Are overlaid with gold, the best;  
Such unusual splendor vouches  
The coming of an honored guest.

Your Balder is the one expected,  
For Balder have we brewed bright drink,  
Though all the gods are sore dejected,  
And ready in despair to sink.

Who then will be good Balder's slayer,  
Who Balder of his life bereave,  
Who the atrocious deed will dare,  
Who will cause the gods to grieve?

By Loké, Hoder instigated,  
The bane of Balder soon will be.  
That deed of his will be most hated  
By gods and men eternally.

Now, Odin, ride thou home, and never  
Shall man again thus visit me,  
Till Ragnarok all chains shall sever,  
And gods and men destroyed be.

Then Loké, in his wiles outdoing  
All other things, to Fensal went,  
Upon the just god Balder's ruin,  
With cunning malice all intent.

When Frigg saw Loké clothed as woman,  
She told to him without alarm  
All things inanimate and human  
Have sworn they Balder will not harm.

Have all things sworn? Aye, all excepting  
Of mistletoe a feeble sprig;  
I blame myself not for neglecting  
To crave an oath from that, said Frigg.

The mistletoe he then obtaining,  
Which grew on Valhal's eastern side,  
And where the gods were gathered gaining,  
Found Hoder standing far aside.

Said Loké, why art thou not throwing?  
Art blind? I will direct thy hand.  
Here, hurl this shrub that I found growing  
On th' eastern side of Valhal's land.

The mistletoe then Hoder darted  
And Balder fell pierced through and through,  
And all the gods with horror started,  
No bounds their lamentations knew.

Then Frigg said, who would gain her favor  
Must go to ask her son from Hel,  
Who'd do this, could much anguish save her,  
And he would be rewarded well.

Then Hermod, called the nimble, offered  
The dangerous journey to perform;  
And took the steed that Odin proffered,  
Rode faster far than moves a storm.

He onward rode, through deep, dark valleys,  
So dark that naught could be discerned;  
O'er Gjaller bridge he proudly sallies,  
And of the maiden there he learned

Balder o'er the bridge had ridden,  
Downward, outward, to the north,  
Where the abode of Hel lay hidden,  
Thither Hermod now sped forth.

Beyond Hel's gate he saw his brother,  
Good Balder, sitting on a throne,  
Distinguished high above all others,  
In grace and glory richer grown.

There Hel, the haughty, he entreated,  
To let good Balder free again,  
And told to her the woe, deep-seated,  
His death had caused 'mongst gods and men.

Then Hel to Hermod thus replied,  
If Balder was beloved by all,  
Should now by her be fully tried,  
If everything will let tears fall.

If e'en the very stones lament him,  
Then he, with thee, I grant, shall go.  
In Asgard thou shalt say, I sent him,  
And dissipate the god's great woe.

Then to the gods, in Asgard weeping,  
Told Hermod all he'd seen and heard —  
How Hel o'er Balder guard was keeping,  
Yet sent to them a hopeful word:

If only everything in Nature  
Unanimously for him wept,  
If Balder's fate moved every creature,  
He should no more by Hel be kept.

Then messengers were sent to carry  
The tidings over all the earth,  
Weep, weep for Balder — do not tarry;  
Of tears let there not be a dearth!

Then all things wept, and as to Odin  
The messengers their way resumed,  
There stood an obstacle their road in,  
And Balder still to Hel is doomed.

A giantess, most foul and spiteful,  
They met 'ere they had quite returned.  
She envied them their bliss delightful,  
And wept but tears of hate that burned.

Loké 'twas, the most perfidious,  
Who feigned himself a giantess;  
And thus dissembling and insidious  
Wrought wrong that nothing could redress.

(3)

*UNDER THE WILLOW ON THE BANK OF LAKE  
MONONA.*

The mosses are damp and the ferns wet with dew,  
And all nature is singing a song ever new;  
The lark and the robin soar high in the air,  
And the perfume of spring-flowers is borne everywhere,  
And under the willow I sit on a stone,  
I gaze on the pebbles that 'round me are thrown;  
I list to the waves that wash up to my feet,  
And I think there is nothing on earth half so sweet  
As the waves and the willow, the mosses and flowers,  
And the sweet-scented breath of the early spring hours.

The summer sun high in the heavens has gone,  
Once more 'neath the willow I sit on the stone,  
The grasses are withered, the mosses are dead,  
But the rose and the lily bloom bright in their stead.  
The summer winds play on the face of the lake,  
And from their deep slumber its waters they wake,  
No more gliding softly like zephyrs along;  
They drown the low echo of each wood-land song,  
As the foam-crested billows sweep up to the shore,  
I sit 'neath the willow and list to their roar.



The moon shineth out on the brow of the night,  
And illumines all things with her soft mellow light,  
The long summer day has come to a close,  
And nature is sleeping in quiet repose.  
The willow-tree leaflets stoop down to the lake,  
To kiss it good night and a farewell to take;  
The stars are reflected in beauty beneath,  
And clouds are encircling the moon like a wreath,  
And under the willow again on the stone,  
I sit in the moon-light, I sit there alone,  
I imagine the future, I dream of the past,  
And rejoice in the present, too happy to last.

Under the willow its leaflets lie dead,  
Its beauty has vanished, its verdure has fled,  
Its bare branches wave in the keen autumn breeze,  
And it tells of its woe to the neighboring trees.  
Be patient, be prayerful, the Father is kind,  
A voice whispered back, 'twas the voice of the wind.

Under the willow the pure driven snow  
Has covered the stone and the pebbles below.  
The flowerets are dead, the waters are still,  
And the flocks seek the sunniest side of the hill;  
'Tis winter, cold winter, majestic and grim,  
All things must stoop low and do homage to him.

Under the willow I'll lay me to sleep,  
When I sleep that last slumber so dreamless and deep,  
And the willow tree leaflets shall bend o'er my grave,  
And whisper good night to the silvery wave.

*LINES.*

Long, dreary roads that stretch before me,  
Long, weary miles that I must tread,  
Brown, eerie branches waving o'er me,  
Dry, faded leaves beneath me spread.

Oh, lonely heart within me beating,  
Sad, lonely heart unsatisfied!  
O, moments fleeting, ever fleeting,  
Bring me the balm so long denied!

Oh bring to me a glad to-morrow  
Whose light shall last forevermore,  
When heart and brain shall rest from sorrow  
And earthly wanderings be o'er.

*THE RUSTLING OF THE CORN.*

'Tis the rustling of the corn I hear,  
The rustling of the corn!  
In the sweetest season of the year,  
A languid, tender morn,  
When fresh young June came o'er the hills  
With roses in her hands;  
Bringing warm airs and colors bright  
From far-off southern lands.

I walked and listened. Here and there  
A bird sang on a spray;  
I looked into the distance where  
The misty hill-tops lay.  
The clouds—ah, how they sailed and sailed  
Like white ships on the sea!  
As pure as vestal virgin veiled,  
As beautiful to see.

But nothing in that glad spring day  
Could fill me with delight  
Like the rustling of the corn, the sway  
Of the young leaves green and bright.

The song my soul was singing,  
The tune the breezes played,  
In chorus sweet were ringing,  
While Hope rare promise made.

O summer days, grow longer,  
O summer days, grow warm,  
Then will the corn grow stronger,  
The ears begin to form.  
And golden tassels swinging  
Shall every field adorn;  
Each day new promise bringing  
Of the harvest of the corn.

O weary, waiting mortal,  
Now journeying the way  
That leads into the portal  
Of God's eternal day,  
Let not thy footsteps stumble  
In ways of sin and pride,  
For only to the humble  
That gate shall open wide.

And as the days grow longer,  
Grow thou in faith and grace;  
Grow thou in wisdom stronger;  
Give love a dwelling place

Where it may live and flourish,  
Deep, deep within thy breast,  
And every feeling nourish  
Which can render life more blest.

When the reaper Death shall find thee  
In thy life's rich harvest field,  
And in sheaves of souls shall bind thee,  
May thy years ripe blessings yield.  
Thus, in harmony, the rustling corn  
To my soul seemed to sing,  
That tender, beauty-breathing morn,  
As I walked, listening.

Now all the corn fields yellow stand;  
The north wind whistles there,  
And sweeps across the stubble land,  
And through the forests bare.  
One more sweet summer time is past —  
Its harvest time is o'er;  
O summer days, too dear to last!  
O Friends that come no more!

*TO A FRIEND.*

My friend, we've met  
But seldom yet,  
Though often may we meet,  
As down the way  
In life's fair day  
We press with anxious feet.

Now Hope's bright sun  
Gilds one by one  
Life's valleys, dark and deep;  
And the far-off heights  
Its splendor lights  
And the fields wherein we reap.

Our journey through,  
May the sunset hue  
That will gleam in our evening west,  
Be as bright a gold  
As Hope's dawn foretold,  
And promise a pure, sweet rest.

When 'round us fold  
The shadows old,  
That lengthening show the day's decline,  
May still the bond  
Of friendship fond  
Be yours, my friend, and mine.



*MORNING-GLORIES.*

Wreaths and beautiful clusters,  
Crimson, and purple, and white,  
Growing so still 'mid the darkness,  
Blossoming out in the light;  
Coming when first comes the daydawn,  
Staying but one little hour,  
Lent, like all earthly born treasures,  
Soon taken away by the Power  
Who in His all-providence seeth  
The wants of each poor human breast,  
And knows if earth were all happy,  
We ne'er would seek heavenly rest.

He taketh our hopes and our flowers,  
He taketh, but giveth far more;  
He sendeth the storm on life's voyage  
To make us think more of the shore,  
To turn our thoughts toward the haven,  
To teach us all things here are vain,  
And earth's hopes, like its sweet morning-glories,  
Blossom out in joy and in sunshine,  
But not in sadness and rain.

*INDEPENDENCE DAY, JULY 4, 1876.*

Fast away the clouds are flying,  
Shadows 'round me creep,  
And the world is now awaking  
From its dreams and sleep.

O'er the water, brightly shining,  
Stray the sunbeams through the wave,  
Or where the ivy, fondly twining,  
Covers o'er some lonely cave.

No prouder sun e'er shone beyond  
The old Atlantic wave,  
Than that which to our land to-day  
The God of Freedom gave.

But one as proud shone fair and bright  
One hundred years ago,  
But not a nation grand and free  
Its golden beams fell on.

Only a brave and noble few,  
A struggling patriot band,  
Who, trusting in the power of right,  
Had "dared the Briton's hand."

Broad our land, by oceans bounded,  
Long her rivers, green her fields,  
Rich and rare the golden treasure  
Which her fertile bosom yields.

Soars the eagle through our forests —  
Noblest bird that roams the sky —  
Floats our flag from many a steeple,  
Many a dome and turret high.

Long may we live, unbound, unfettered,  
Free from chains of slavery;  
Long may peace, with gentle scepter,  
Rule our land from sea to sea.

Chime, ye bells, and flow, ye breezes,  
Waft the strains along,  
Make each hill and valley echo  
With the sound of freedom's song.

*NOW AND THEN.*

Where the grape vine clings and clusters  
All about the garden wall,  
And the pine wards off the blusters  
Of the north wind in the fall,

Where the spring first brings her flowers,  
Little, lowly, lovely things,  
And through all the golden hours,  
Every warbling wild bird sings,

Where summer finds the rose-buds blowing,  
In queenly grace and glistening sheen,  
And clover 'mid the grasses growing,  
Dots white blossoms o'er the green,

Where from nest on branch secluded,  
First the birdlings learn to fly,  
And no falcon e'er intruded  
On their flights to reach the sky,

Where the boughs in autumn bending  
Give their wealth, nor wish to keep,  
And the winter snow-shrouds sending,  
Wraps the world in wondrous sleep.

There, in all this sweet seclusion,  
    'Mid the rambling branch and spray,  
Free from care and rough intrusion,  
    Little Nora spent the day.

There she sat, her child-thoughts thinking,  
    Forming childish fancies bright,  
One thought to another linking,  
    Wrought a chain of young delight.

But she wished the time flew swifter,  
    And she were a maiden fair,  
And a loving sunbeam kissed her,  
    Kissed her pretty golden hair.

When she saw the darkness coming  
    O'er the fields, o'er all the world,  
Nora ceased her low sweet humming,  
    Hastened where the brown smoke curled.

From the farm house, Nora's mother  
    Called her child with gentle tone,  
Nora's answer, but another  
    Voice as gentle as her own.

\*                      \*                      \*

Still the vine with many a twining  
    Wanders o'er the garden wall;

Still the clover blossoms shining,  
Deck the sward from spring to fall.

Nora is a lovely maiden;  
Time has sped and left her this,  
And her mind with thoughts is laden,  
Thoughts about the sunbeam's kiss.

Thoughts of hours of dreaming playtime  
And of buds and vines and birds;  
All the sweets of childhood's Maytime,  
All its tender, loving words.

In the garden she is sitting,  
Just the same as long ago,  
And the breezes round her flitting  
Bear the same song, sweet and low.

And the twilight deepening over  
Brings the first calm hour of night,  
And Nora's waiting for her lover  
In the red moon's softened light.

*MARTHA WHALEN.*

One winter day they told me she was dead,  
Her sweet, young face I never more could see,  
I listened, stunned and sad to what they said,  
Dead! Martha dead! ah no, it cannot be!

But so it was. God claimed her for His own,  
And sent His angel, Death, to bring her home  
Ere she the sorrows of this life had known,  
Before her feet in ways of sin could roam.

Oft have I watched her in the church at prayer;  
Her head bowed low before the holy guest,  
Whose Presence filled the sanctuary there,  
And filled her heart with peace, and love and rest.

Athwart her yellow hair the sunlight fell,  
And seemed to crown her with a halo bright,  
Which would all darkness from her soul dispel,  
And guard her with its glistening, gleaming light.

I went to see her grave when summer came.  
"Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God,"  
Was written on the stone beneath her name,  
And pansies blossomed by the rich, green sod.

MARTHA WHALEN.

I knelt with love and reverence there to pray.

What could be sweeter than her life? I thought,  
Earth's day is beautiful, but Heaven's fair day  
Shines now for her with untold beauty fraught.

O, happy mother of so blest a child;

Thou'st laid thy treasure up where moth and rust  
Cannot consume, nor anything defiled  
Contaminate with touch of sin and dust.

Her pictured face looks at me from the wall;

Her eyes, her smile, caught by the artist's hand.  
And, as I write, the evening shadows fall,  
And darkness, silent, comes o'er all the land.

One thought remains to me for aye and aye;

Thought of a home from partings all secure,  
Where youth fades not, nor our beloved ones die,  
The home of God, and souls made white and pure.



*WAITING.*

Each one of us is waiting for a something not at hand;  
Each one of us is longing for some magic fairy wand  
To rend the mystic curtain closely drawn before the  
years,

That Time holds hidden from us in a dark recess of fears.  
Oh! the years, how many secrets will their pages dread  
unfold;

How many loves and longings lie beneath their covers  
cold,

How many of Hope's whispers shall echo there once  
more,

With a deeper, sweeter meaning, than they ever had  
before.

But oh! enough of sorrow, each mortal life must know;  
Full many a page is darkened by the sad impress of woe.  
Voices now around us ringing with the glad impulse of  
mirth,

Will be hushed, so hushed, forever in the silent halls of  
earth.

Hands, which often grew weary ere the closing of the  
day,

Shall by other hands be folded in their last long rest  
away.

Feet, which started in the morning fresh and eager as  
our own,

Shall slip on stony pathways or be lost in deserts lone,  
But Death, the pitying angel, will gather them again,  
In a silent, peaceful city, where all wanderers remain.

All these things doth Time hold hidden, and not one of  
us may know

Whose hands shall first be folded, whose voice first  
silent grow.

New springs will bring new flowers; shall we pluck the  
blossoms gay?

Will our lives grow calmer, happier, in some brighter,  
longer day?

When the summers paint the roses, or the waxen lilies  
mold,

Will our yearning senses gather all the fragrance that  
they hold?

Whether *we* shall miss our loved ones, or *they* look for  
us in vain,

We know not. Time draws the curtain o'er our coming  
joy or pain,

But how oft depressed with waiting, we fain its folds  
would part,

For just one glance to satisfy the cravings of the heart.

*SUNBEAMS IN THE BROOK.*

Oh, the glorious, golden glory  
Of that sunshine woven story  
Written on the brooklet pebbles  
'Neath the onward-flowing wave;  
Story told e'en by a river  
Of a great and bounteous Giver,  
And a home beyond the grave.  
Ever changing, ever ranging,  
Parting sometimes, meeting soon,  
Whispering in the pleasant May-time  
Of the warmer rays of June.  
Oh, I love the music mellow,  
And I love the sunshine yellow,  
Love the glimmer, love the shimmer,  
Love the lessons there I learn;  
And to sift each hidden meaning,  
And to keep the truth's bright gleaming  
Is the gift for which I yearn.

And I wonder, as asunder  
Break the chains of sunlight thread,  
If our world life so shall leave us  
Naught of strife, and nothing grievous,

Holding us one moment more,  
But with mind and heart all ready,  
Swiftly, silently and steady,  
Leave at last, our wanderings o'er,  
As we pass and meet and sever  
For the moment or forever,  
Like the sunbeams brightly dancing  
Toward the future gaily glancing,  
All our living one sweet chime;  
Naught of shadow dims our vision,  
And we heed not the precision  
Of the bright years flowing past us  
And the fate that here has cast us  
'Neath the current, swift, of Time.

Oh, the cloud the daylight shading,  
Oh, the sunbeams slowly fading,  
Oh, the soft and tender gloaming,  
And the feet that tired from roaming  
Find at last a home.

*FOR A FRIEND'S ALBUM.*

Ever in thy mind  
May purest thoughts a dwelling find;  
May thy life-work noble be,  
Ruled by Faith and Charity;  
Sorrow comes to one and all,  
But may the storm-clouds gently fall  
Over thee, and each day  
May some joy blossom by thy way.

*WEARY.*

Brightest paths I walked in spring,  
Hedged with roses wild and sweet;  
Gay green grasses blossoming,  
Bent beneath my careless feet.

But I heeded, heeded not  
All the beauty, all the scent,  
Still I sought a fairer spot.  
Unsatisfied I onward went.

In the summer's fervid heat  
Weary were my steps and slow,  
Passing many a cool retreat,  
Many a bower where breezes blow.

Each thing invited me to share  
In its joyful life of love.  
Brooklets sang to me of where  
Branches met their waves above.

Pause and rest the thrushes sang,  
Mortal, wherefore speed so fast;  
And the chiming church bells rang,  
"Tarry," "tarry," as I passed.

Thus I walked till autumn came,  
Autumn with its laden trees,  
With its hillsides all aflame;  
But could not my desire appease.

Now the winter and the night  
And the blinding storm of wrong  
Chill my soul and dim its sight,  
And moans extinguish hope's last song.

I am weary of this life.  
Tired of sin and vain regrets;  
Weary of the hateful strife  
Man's commerce with man begets.

Earthly treasures I have sought;  
Earthly love and earthly rest.  
Ah, but I have found them not;  
Fruitless, fruitless was my quest.

Now for better love I yearn,  
Boundless, vast and lasting love;  
And my footsteps gladly turn  
To my father's throne above.

And eternal rest I crave,  
Rest supreme of heart and soul.  
Rest found just beyond the grave,  
Where earth's endless echoes roll.

Take me, dear Lord Jesus, home,  
Gather in Thy wandering sheep,  
Darkest ways on earth I roam,  
Low around me shadows creep.

Dire Despair my soul pursues,  
Wolves of want would fain devour;  
Take me ere my way I lose,  
Save me, save me, by Thy power!

Darker, lower falls the night;  
Louder moans the maniac wind;  
Let me see on high a light,  
Let thy sheep a folding find.

Take me to Thy pastures fair,  
Let my soul refreshed be,  
Spurning mortal sin and care,  
Let me live for aye with Thee.



*TO MISS MARY COIT SPOONER*

Wilt thou accept my proffered lay,  
Dear friend, upon thy wedding day?  
Wilt let me sing to thee  
A song I've gathered here and there,  
From flower and field and balmy air;  
From soft grey clouds that rolled away  
Full many a bygone summer day;  
From whispers of the summer wind  
Among the tall green poplar trees;  
From many a hedge with roses lined,  
Wild roses, red, and palest pink,  
And lilies just beyond the brink  
Of brooks that ever flow and flow,  
Unheeding how the lilies grow;  
And birds — Oh birds have sung to me!  
The robin in the early morn,  
The thrush at twilight in a tree,  
And black-birds piped among the corn.  
All through the long, long day,  
When ears were full and ripening fast  
And all the corn-leaves turning yellow,  
And in the orchard every blast  
Would fling down apples large and mellow.

I've gathered music from the apple's fall,  
And from the black-birds piping shrill;  
From robins and from thrush's call,  
And from the mournful whip-poor-will,  
That by my window every night  
Sang o'er and o'er the self-same words.  
While half awake and dreaming half,  
I listened; was it spite,  
Or injury dark inspired its song  
Those summer evenings sweet and long,  
Those beauteous nights when common things  
Gilded by moonlight soft and pale  
Remind one of a fairy tale;  
Of nooks enchanted, magic rings,  
And elfin folk who danced and sung  
And in their magic circle flung  
Each mortal who in wandering by  
Disturbed their elfish revelry.  
Oh nights of summer! Memory  
Comes ever then to sit with me.  
She tells me of some distant friends,  
Of kindly words their lips have said,  
Of places where we roamed together,  
Or where we hoped to meet again.  
But some dear ones, alas, are dead;  
New graves on which rare pansies bloom,

Or where some weeping willow bends,  
Contain loved forms and well-known faces  
Shut down in darkness and in gloom,  
Securely held in Death's embraces.  
I do not, cannot weep for them.  
It seems as if they hovered near me  
On spirit wings to aid and cheer me  
And crown me with a diadem  
Of peace and patience, trust and love.  
And listening with my soul I hear  
Soul-music, low and sweet and clear,  
And now the song in building mine  
And nature's in the thought,  
Wilt thou accept as thine.

## THE SONG.

Wandering in a meadow wide,  
    "Half hidden by a stone,"  
A tender violet I espied.  
    Why blossom here alone,  
Why blossom here alone, I cried,  
    Why blossom here alone!  
The other flowers hang o'er the brook,  
    With dainty faces bright,  
Or shake their perfumed petals out  
    On some fair grassy height,

Or by the footpath in the lane  
In colors gay arrayed,  
So sweet we cannot call them vain,  
Are temptingly displayed.  
The bright-eyed pale anemone,  
In ample dress of green,  
Beneath some spreading forest tree,  
In simple state is seen.  
The rose within the garden sits,  
Rich, beautiful and proud;  
The butterfly that o'er her flits,  
Hath to her beauty bowed,  
And stooped to kiss her damask cheek,  
Ere hurrying on his way.  
To her fine birds with plumage sleek  
Have sung their grandest lay.  
Oh, all the flowers find fitter place  
Than this lone spot to blow.  
What signifies grace, loveliness,  
If here unseen they grow?  
Oh, mortal, look with eyes of soul,  
Put worldly wisdom hence;  
The Power that doth all things control  
In wise omnipotence  
Hath placed me here, the blossom said,  
And here, content, I grow.

My petals to the breeze I spread,  
My perfume there bestow;  
And unparaded loveliness,  
The best of all, I hold,  
Its value being none the less  
Because like unmined gold,  
Hidden away within the earth  
Until the finder comes;  
Then will he know its real worth.  
So with each flower that blooms,  
They will not useless bloom and fade;  
Some one their home shall find,  
Some heart be happy by them made,  
Or cheered some downcast mind.  
Oh, sweetest flower, thy finder, I,  
Come, stay not here alone,  
For I for thee must ever sigh,  
Since I thy face have known.  
Though happy, still thou hast not known  
That heritage of bliss;  
A love that's all in all thine own,  
A lover's tender kiss.  
Oh, thou wilt happy be, dear one,  
Our life a summer day,  
Where clouds perhaps may cross the sun,  
But quickly hie away.

The flower a maiden was, you've guessed.

What next she said to me,

The holiest secret of my breast

Forevermore shall be.

*DAS GRAB.*

[FROM THE GERMAN OF SALIS.]

The grave is deep and stilly,  
Its brink inspires with awe,  
It veils with darkness over  
A land which none e'er saw.

The nightingale's sweet singing  
Sounds not within its hall;  
And friendship's roses only  
On the hill's soft mosses fall.

In vain forsaken lovers  
With anguish wring their hands;  
The solace that they seek for  
Is found in other lands.

Beyond the pale of sorrow,  
Beyond our earthly night,  
Where one long glad to-morrow  
Shall wrap them in its light,

No orphaned ones lamenting  
Shall reach beyond the grave,  
For just from out its darkness  
Springs the daylight that they crave.

And so the longed for quiet  
Abides no place within,  
Till through the dark, dark portal,  
Man goes that rest to win.

The poor heart agitated  
By many storms below,  
Acquires the peace so lasting,  
When time it may not know.



*THE LITTLE BROKEN RING.*

[FROM THE GERMAN OF EICHENDORFF.]

In the cool and pleasant valley  
Where dwelt my darling one,  
The mill-wheel still goes ceaselessly  
From morn till set of sun.

But my darling has departed,  
Though the mill-wheel yet goes 'round,  
And all alone with saddest thoughts  
I listen to its sound.

Truly she had promised me,  
Gave me a golden pledge;  
A little ring to bind her troth  
Within its shining edge.

Her promise she has broken;  
My ring asunder snapped;  
The vow once in its circle bound  
By faithlessness is wrapped.

As a wandering musician  
I would that I might roam,  
And sing my song of sadness  
As I go from home to home.

Or boldly in the bloody fray  
I would that I might rush,  
Around the still camp-fire to lie  
When comes the dark night's hush.

I hear the mill-wheel going,  
I wish — I know not what.  
To die, I think would be to me  
By far the happiest lot.

Then would a sudden quiet  
Come to my weary soul;  
The wheel would then for me be still,  
My ring again be whole.

*SONNET BY MICHAEL ANGELO.*

(TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF HERMAN GRIMM.)

See how the golden crown entranced with bliss  
Surrounds with bud and bloom thy yellow hair;  
Only the flower that lowest droops may dare  
Upon thy forehead press the first sweet kiss.

How joyfully this garment all the day  
Folds closely 'round thy shoulders and thy throat,  
To which thy fair, bright ringlets downward float  
And o'er thy cheek in gladness softly play.

But see how now with knots enclosing,  
Yielding and yet firm the silken band,  
Is happy made upon thy breast reposing.

The girdle speaks, oh let the joy be mine,  
To hold thee, clasp thee thus forever-more,  
As arms would for the first time 'round thee twine.

*TO THE FAMILY OF A DECEASED FRIEND.*

Where are thy smiles? the mother cries;  
Where is the prattle of thy lisping tongue?  
Where is the light of thy sweet dark eyes?  
My baby child, so fair, so young.  
Oh why so still thy form, so cold thy brow;  
How dark upon thy cheek of snow  
Thy lashes lie. Thou'rt dead! I bow  
Before thy will, O God; but Thou  
Dost know the grief Thou givest me,  
I cannot bear without help, Lord, from Thee.

All thy childhood's years gone by,  
A noble manhood just begun.  
Oh, woe, that I have seen thee die,  
My cherished child, my only son.  
Thus mourns the father for his child,  
Whom Death has snatched from him for aye.  
Friends kindly say "be reconciled."  
He hears them not; the night winds wild  
Blend with his cry their wailings loud,  
That old man's hope lies in a shroud.

Over a young, loved brother's bier  
A sorrowing sister weeps,  
And brothers mourn a sister dear,  
Who early in Death's chamber sleeps,  
And lovers parted may not meet,  
Such sorrow deep to life is given.  
Fate mixes bitter things with sweet;  
And buds and brambles 'neath our feet,  
Lie strewn in equal quantities, [flies.  
And ever from our grasp the phantom pleasure

But when the husband from the wife,  
Death tears with ruthless hand away,  
Oh, hour to widowed woman rife  
With awful agony alway.  
When children call and call in vain,  
A father's well-known voice to hear.  
What words can all that woe contain?  
Ah, who can know the bitter pain?  
God only knows; He sees the heart;  
Sees all its sorrow, heals the smart.

O, Jesus, in that brighter home,  
Which by Thy blood for us was won,  
No matter where on earth we roam,  
May we all meet in unison.

May hallowed memories of the dead  
Forever keep us good and pure,  
Until by angel footsteps led  
From out this life of fear and dread,  
We reach our Father's mansion high,  
And dwell with Him beyond the sky.

*WELCOME TO PARNELL AND DILLON.*

Thrice welcome, Parnell, to the City of Lakes.  
'Way down in our bosoms a deep feeling wakes;  
A feeling of pride for dear Ireland's Parnell,  
A feeling far prouder than language can tell.  
And thrice welcome, Dillon; your name, too, is dear  
To lovers of justice who welcome you here.

You come to our halls and our hearthstones to plead  
For our forefathers' land in the hour of her need;  
In the hour when her foes and oppressors are strong  
To trample her down with the foul tread of wrong.

She is stricken and starving, and chained are her hands;  
Her products usurped are, and stolen her lands;  
But her voice still is free, and the woe that she feels  
She tells to the world, and to Heaven appeals  
For justice, and freedom from England's dark chain,  
Forged from usury, land rents and thieves' love of gain.  
And Heaven will hear. God has given His word  
That the cry of the injured shall ever be heard.

O Ireland, dear Ireland, God's blessing on thee,  
"First flower of the earth and first gem of the sea;"

May God in His mercy bend low at thy call,  
And free thee forever from England's dire thrall.  
May He give to thy champions spirits of steel,  
And voice ever potent to work for thy weal.  
May He bless thee, Parnell, and thy efforts crown  
With lasting success and glorious renown.



*COMING.*

I count the hours till you come to me,  
My absent one, my love.  
And oh, it is great, the sum to me,  
Of the hours as they slowly move.

From the elder-bush sings the whip-poor-will;  
The moon shines red and low;  
Like a great dark shadow seems the hill,  
Like a mirror the marsh below.

You said you would come, as before you came,  
When night's first hour was near;  
Ah, hush, did I hear you call my name?  
Yes, dearest, you are here.

*TWO MAIDENS.*

Two maidens mourned two lovers gone,  
Two lovers gone for aye;  
Each sat apart with bruised heart,  
Throughout the long, long day.

Each thought about a farewell clasp,  
A farewell word and kiss,  
Each mused on happy by-gone days,  
Dear days of hope and bliss.

There is no other in the world,  
So dear a friend to me,  
There is no other heart can hold  
Mine own entirely.

Oh brightly shines the sun to-day,  
And sweetly bloom the flowers;  
But slowly, slowly wear away  
The grief-beladen hours.

I care not for the summer day,  
Its length but wearies me;  
I fain would hasten far away,  
To heaven, my love, and thee.

One only friend can me unite,  
With that dear one I love;  
Come, death, I do not dread your might.  
Come waft my soul above.

The other maiden sorely wept,  
And clasped her trembling hands;  
O God, the sin of vows unkept,  
Thy vengeance dire demands!

Yet I have loved him, love him still,  
Despite his perjury;  
I will not, cannot wish him ill,  
Though he's been false to me.

I think 'tis easier to forgive  
Than to inflict a wrong.  
So unavenged my life I'll live,  
Be that life short or long.

*THE PICNIC AT WESTPORT.*

On the second of July, in the morning,  
I awoke and looked out through the pane;  
I found, and it grieved me to find it,  
In the darkness had fallen the rain.

The sun set in splendor and beauty,  
Each cloud-bank was purple and red,  
With a rarely sweet border of silver  
And gold on the surface o'erspread.

And whisperings came of the morrow —  
Whisperings of hope and of fun;  
The wind told it all to the tree-tops,  
But they told it to me, every one.

And naught is so sweet as a promise  
From some one who's trusted and true;  
But the wind is so fickle a creature,  
A doubt was still darkening my view.

The "ifs," the "perhapses" and "maybes"  
Of life are great bugbears, of course;  
But ever and always we heed them,  
Whatever their current or source.

So, when I awoke in the morning  
I arose and looked out through the pane;  
I found, and it grieved me to find it,  
In the darkness had fallen the rain.

The boughs were low hung with the rain-drops,  
The grass and the ground were all wet;  
But just then the sun showed his presence,  
And I thought, there is hope for us yet.

For each little flickering sunbeam,  
As it gilded some rain-laden flower,  
Brightened it all over with beauty,  
Yet lost not a bit of its power.

And a picnic depends on the weather;  
The weather depends on the sun;  
And the joy of each picnicking mortal  
Depends on the course that they run.

If the clouds try to take the precedence,  
And the sun sinks in shadow obscure,  
Then to every vain doubt we give credence,  
And say, it will rain, to be sure.

But the clouds lost themselves in the heaven,  
The sun dried the earth with its rays,  
And we left off repining and grumbling,  
And said, This is the finest of days.

We'll go to the picnic at Westport,  
We've been thinking to go for a week,  
And now to imagine we couldn't,  
Would be agony worse than the creak  
Of a chair that is olden and weak-backed,  
When some juvenile, just out of school,  
Sits down in an excess of spirits,  
Kept back by the schoolmaster's rule.

We went to the picnic at Westport,  
In a sweet little grove by the church,  
But alas! for our bright expectations,  
At last we were caught in the lurch.

For the clouds had, unnoticed, been pouting  
Away in a corner all day;  
But having recovered their spirits,  
Were off for a frolicsome play.

Yes, it rained on the picnic at Westport,  
It wet the girl's dresses and hats,  
It rained on, regardless of dinner  
And gentlemen's fine white cravats.

And some said, "I'm sorry we came here,"  
And some said, "Come quick, let us start;"  
And another, "I think I hear thunder,"  
But 'twas only the sound of a cart.

The opinions of people were many,  
Some fretted, some scolded, some laughed;  
And one said, " If the flood keeps on coming  
We'll have to go home on a raft! "

But again were the hopeful rewarded,  
Again did the dancing commence,  
And small boys who left to seek shelter  
Came joyfully jumping the fence.

So now if you want to be merry,  
At least for one time in the year,  
Just go to the picnic at Westport,  
You'll find there the nicest of cheer.

(6)

*AGAIN.*

Blooming again like the little spring flower,  
Shining again like the sun through the shower,  
Hoping again like the heart in its grief,  
Expanding again like the bud to the leaf.

Living again life's pilgrimage o'er,  
Sailing along by the bright golden shore,  
Knowing nothing of trouble, and nothing of care,  
Heavenly light the raiment we wear.

Hoping again, yes, hope is fulfilled,  
And the sunshine of faith warms the heart that was  
    chilled,  
As the daisy will bloom when comes the spring rain,  
And the earth has been warmed by the sunshine again.

Loving again the love that is true,  
Greeting again the loved forms that we knew,  
Waking again to a beautiful day,  
That knoweth no nightfall or passing away.



*TO HATTIE H.*

Hattie, yonder lies the snow,  
    White and deep!  
Many bright things lie below,  
    Fast asleep!  
Dreaming, in the cold and night,  
Of the spring-time, warm and bright;  
Waiting for the tender rain —  
    Sorrow's child!  
Born upon some mountain height,  
    Stern and wild,  
Which the everlasting mist  
Since eternity has kissed.  
Listening 'til the birds' glad call  
    Of song and love  
In their silent cells shall fall  
    From above.  
Dreaming, waiting, listening,  
Many a bright and gentle thing  
In your youthful spirit lies —  
    Joy and grief  
Both shall search, and find them there  
    (As the sunshine finds the leaf),  
Through the ice and snow of years  
Nourished both by smiles and tears.

*THE POEM OF LIFE.*

TO M. C. S.

Each life is a mystical poem,  
And we know not the words of the song,  
But the music sounds sweetly or sadly,  
As it floats on our thought-waves along.

The music is sweet in the morning,  
And hope breathes in every strain;  
We see not the cloud in the distance,  
We hear not the fall of the rain.

The music grows sad in the twilight,  
As we think of the day that is gone;  
And we sigh for the hopes that we founded  
On the first fleeting flush of the dawn.

For how many are blighted forever!  
Like the flower, when its rootlets are dead;  
We may nourish the bud for a moment,  
But too soon all its beauty has fled.

The words of this poem of living  
God knoweth, and we'll know at last —  
When, the song and the music all ended,  
Its echoes roll back from the past.

*TO CARRIE KEENAN, ON HER BIRTHDAY.*

The Mays of twenty years have twined  
Their blossoms round your brow;  
They've sown their seed within your mind,  
And changed your then to now.

Not every bud has bloomed aright,  
Not every flower was fair —  
The frost did wither some, and blight;  
The perfect ones were rare.

Hope is a flower that blooms for all;  
Faith is the stem whereon it grows;  
Love is a sweet, sad name we call  
The place where faith and hope repose.

Look without fear to future years,  
Treasure the memory of the past;  
Take them all, both smiles and tears,  
And life will happily end at last.

*TO C.*

Dear, sorrowing friend, with thee I sympathize.

When last I saw thee, glad and full of joy,  
I little thought that tears would dim thy eyes,  
And time so soon thy happiness destroy.

Thou wast in thy deep happiness so blest,  
Unconsciously thy lips would wear a smile;  
The dove of peace sat brooding in thy breast,  
And love and hope staid with thee all the while.

O, life is full of bitterness and woe,  
And skies, most fair at morn, may cloud ere night;  
We walk, yet knowing not the way we go;  
We see, but with a dim, imperfect sight.

But, though we see not, know not, all the way  
A Hand is reached to ours, to guide and save;  
Until the brightness of eternal day  
Shall dawn upon our souls beyond the grave.

Oh, trust, dear friend, this guiding, saving Hand,  
And though thy prayers are all unanswered, still  
God works in ways we cannot understand;  
His promise to the just He will fulfill.

*TWO YEARS.*

I have loved a tall, proud form,  
And a gentle, manly tone;  
I have loved a hand to clasp,  
And think it was my own.

I have loved an eye that spoke  
What lips had told before;  
I have loved the look that thrilled  
E'en to my bosom's core.

I have loved the summer eves  
That brought my love to me,  
And the rustling of the leaves  
Upon the old oak tree.

I have loved the winter time,  
For my love smiled warm and bright,  
And the joy-bells' merry chime  
Filled my soul with calm delight.

Peace on earth, good will to men,  
Rang throughout the Christmas sky,  
And my love was with me then,  
When the old year's close drew nigh.

The new year came, but oh!  
It brought but pain to me,  
A long, unending woe —  
My love no more I see.

That new year's morning bright,  
They told me he was dead;  
That with the old year's flight,  
His spirit too had fled.

'Tis summer-time again,  
And o'er his lonely grave  
Those mourners for all men,  
The long, green grasses wave.

I hear the summer wind  
Whisper in the old oak tree,  
But never have divined  
Its meaning unto me.

But it seems to speak of days  
Forever gone; and aye!  
Whose memory with me stays,  
And like love, can never die.

*THE COMING OF WINTER.*

Softly down the first flakes falling,  
Mingle with the faded leaves;  
Nature, for the cold, dead earth,  
Shrouds of purest whiteness weaves;

And the wind the branches stirring,  
Makes a plaintive, mournful dirge,  
And the acorns, brown and hardy,  
From their sheltering cups emerge.

Down they fall amongst the dry leaves,  
There to lie upon the ground,  
'Till some wandering summer sun-ray,  
Shall each embryo oak have found.

Then to start in life and beauty,  
Emblem of our life to come,  
When we on this earth have waited,  
'Till some sun-ray calls us home.

In the dreamland of October,  
When the soft haze shades the sun,  
I have watched the dying season,  
Watched its beauties one by one,

Fading, changing, ever hastening  
Onward into old decay,  
And I thought about the springtime,  
Thought about the fresh, young May.

Springtime's gone; her budding freshness  
Blossomed into summer flowers;  
Flowers to fruit, whose luscious richness  
We have plucked in autumn hours.

Thus mankind is ever changing,  
Thus we ever more grow old.  
And the clinging buds of childhood,  
Into youth's bright flowers unfold.

And when Time his snowflakes silvery,  
Shall have scattered o'er each brow,  
And the eyes grow dim or sightless,  
That are brightly flashing now,

Then may we, in robe of whiteness,  
Wing our way above the snow,  
And with faith resigned and holy,  
Bid farewell to things below.



*LOST.*

The thrill that came my senses o'er,  
    Whene'er our glances met,  
That thrill comes o'er me now no more;  
    But its memory lingers yet.

My heart I gave, nor thought but thine  
    Was surely given to me,  
O wandering, wounded heart of mine,  
    Come back, come back to me!

Come as thou wert, all happiness,  
    And hope, and trusting love,  
Glad with the warmth of joy's caress,  
    All other bliss above.

But no, ah no, it cannot be!  
    Thou 'st something lost, my heart;  
Something has gone for aye from thee,  
    Which was of thee a part.

And life to me seems strangely cold,  
    And love an erring thing,  
Which, when we grasp and strive to hold,  
    Flies off on swiftest wing.

*ANOTHER YEAR.*

The buds of spring, and summer's flowers,  
The golden fruit of autumn's hours,  
Have come and gone; and now again  
Old Winter clothes the hill and plain  
    In grand attire, with robe of white.  
The old year's passing fast away;  
It ne'er shall see another May  
    Or June-time, beautiful and bright.

Another year will soon be here,  
Another year with hope and fear;  
To some 't will joyous tidings bring,  
On some 't will Death's cold shadow fling;  
    A fate, alas! none can dispel.  
But while we hope for all things good,  
The Father gives our daily food  
    And doeth all things well.

The Father made the day and night,  
He made the spring, with flower-buds bright;  
He made the summer sunshine warm,  
The autumn fields of yellow corn  
    And winter's frost and snow.

But though o'er all the night must pass,  
Though snow shall cover each year's grass,  
God left His hope below.

The darkest night will soon be past,  
The longest winter end at last;  
And though our cross may heavy be,  
We yet the Savior's face shall see,  
If persevering still  
We look beyond the night and snow,  
The fickle joys of here below,  
And do His holy will.

*HOPE.*

Hope is a faith, a dream, a love;  
A something sent us from above,  
Without which all on earth were drear.  
It is a glance of Heaven here.  
O Hope! Without thee all were dead,  
And all our happiness had fled.  
Faith, Hope and Charity; a glorious three:  
Yet in each one is hope.  
We hope, in faith, for life to come,  
In love, we hope for faith.

*MY THOUGHT.*

One day as I sat and merrily wrought,  
Fancy, to me a beautiful thought  
Crowned with hopes the sweetest, brought.  
The thought with wisdom and love was fraught.  
'Twas one I had long and anxiously sought,  
And all my seeking had come to naught.  
For Fancy, the thought in her fairy bower  
Had hidden away, with her wond'rous power,  
And there, amid eloquence all unspoken,  
And poesy bright, full many a token,  
Gladness to wreath 'round the brow of Grief,  
Peace for the waves where the rock and the reef  
Wreck the poor mariner homeward bound,  
And caution to check the warmth of hope;  
Courage, that weakness with strength might cope,  
And 'mid many a thing that 'owned her sway  
And dormant beneath her scepter lay,  
My beautiful thought in her careful keeping  
She kept, till my mind from its dreaming and sleeping,  
Would waken once more at her voice's sound.  
The thought was one of sweet content,  
Of patience and trust in one picture blent;

Of a light that will shine about my way

"Even unto the perfect day."

I took the thought in its purity rare,

Clothed with words of tenderest care.

I wrote it down in my inmost heart,

And the lesson it taught shall never depart.

And oft to the shrine in Fancy's wold

I'll bring my thoughts and my cares of old,

And, as I lay them at her feet,

She will wrap them 'round with radiance sweet.

*I WILL NOT FORGET.*

I have not thee forgotten, I will not thee forget.  
In future years, through smiles, through tears, I will  
remember yet.  
And when my youth's bright flowers lie hid 'neath  
wintry snows,  
When one by one they've come and gone, my triumphs  
and my woes,  
Then, in the bleak December, when I am almost home,  
I'll fancy thou art with me, and the same pathways  
roam.  
And change may come, and partings, and sorrow deep,  
and pain,  
Such sunny days of summer I may never see again.  
For mists may hide the dawning with its rose and purple  
hue,  
And veil the wished-for hill-tops from my eager, longing  
view;  
But o'er the hills Elysian, the sun of hope shall rise,  
And the soul's immortal vision be given to mine eyes;  
And nothing shall be clouded, or wrapped in doubt and  
fear;

In Heaven we shall know our own, the loved and trusted  
here.

And, dear friend, I shall know thee; my soul can ne'er  
forget;

But meeting there, shall greet thee, as oft when here  
we've met.



*TO M. L.*

Thinkest thou  
Forgetfulness has twined about my brow  
Her cypress wreath, shadowing my spirit's sight;  
Striving to wrest from me with sullen might  
The garnered trophies of my earlier years,  
    Usurping Memory's place;  
And jealously distorting her fair work,  
Raveling the gleaming threads that bind  
    The present to the past?

Nay; have no fears;  
Forgetfulness around my pathway does not lurk.  
Her influence casts no shadow o'er my course,  
Nor dims the lustre of departed scenes.  
But Memory, faithful, from each vista gleans  
Some bright, unfading spot  
And pictures it without a blot  
    On my susceptible mind.

There in my mind,  
Unmarred by blighting touches of decay,  
    Thy form I find;  
And there, 'mid many fancies undefined,

Thy words are echoing still;  
And when Imagination o'er me holds firm sway,  
    Bending 'neath hers my will,  
I see thee as I saw thee oft in other times.

    Long years ago  
I daily clasped my hand with thine, sweet friend,  
Nor thought our intercourse could ever end.  
I did not seek to penetrate the mystic veil  
    Of future hours,  
But all my being gladdened like earth's youngest  
    flowers,  
When sunshine, with insinuating glance  
First wakes their latent beauty from its trance,  
And every breeze, passing on its mysterious way  
Catches their incense offerings rare  
From petaled censer; though but for a day  
Their fragrant exhalations fill the air  
We, grateful for the gift,  
Our nobler thoughts to Nature's service lift.  
And for our toilful lives,  
Find recompense when first we burst the gyves  
Of earthly aspiration, seeking far above,  
A spiritual wealth of peace and love.

And so my heart was very glad and young  
When still no joys from me had taken wing,

Nor yet had come the sting  
Which parting gives. There is no tongue,  
However subtle be its eloquence,  
Can give in words the feelings of the heart,  
When friend from friend must part;  
And now my yearning heart the question asks:

Shall we two meet again?  
I ask myself, I ask of all, shall we two meet?  
I turn to mild-faced Pity on her seat,  
Amid the woes of men;  
Her deep, pure sympathy is speechless;  
She smiles, but answers not.  
'Tis most her office from our ken to hide  
The mutability of earthly joy,  
Lest fear of coming pain our bliss alloy,  
Or change our hoping to despair.

We may not meet; and then  
Our messenger of thought must be the pen;  
But friendship's words are cold when written;  
They're like the sculptor's marble, lacking breath,  
Mute, beautiful and changeless as the stamp of Death  
On some pale victim by his anger smitten.

They lack the potent spell  
Which impulse and expression give  
To words that breathe and live.

We miss the accompanying look  
And many a tender meaning thus is lost.

But whether here or there,  
Separate or together, we may dwell,  
God grant we sometime meet  
Happily before His judgment seat,  
And there the record of our lives submit  
To Him, the searcher of all hearts;  
And may He find the record pure,  
Unstained in all its parts;  
Each blot washed out by tears of penitence.

*COMPLETENESS.*

There's nothing in this world complete,  
No song so sad but something sweet  
Mingles the strains between;  
Nothing so sweet but sadness casts  
A shadow somewhere o'er the scene.

Nothing so fair no blemish mars;  
Nothing complete in hue or form;  
Hiding the twinkling of the stars,  
Cometh the cloud and storm.

Buds will open and flowers will fade,  
All too soon is their beauty fled;  
We linger with love o'er the forms decayed,  
And sigh for the perfume and joy they shed.

Ever the water flows on to the shore,  
Wearing the great rocks slowly away,  
Ever the soft white foam comes up,  
Over the billows grey.

Light by the moonbeams bound shore to shore,  
Toying them gaily from crest to crest,  
Calm for the moment, but evermore  
Waters and Time shall know no rest.

They shall wear the rocks into grains of sand  
And shroud the sailor in seaweed tomb;  
And the day we thought at dawn so grand,  
Shall end in sorrow, and pain, and gloom.

Beautiful life, by no tempest tossed,  
Seeking a port in your own bright sea;  
Beware lest your vessel be wrecked and lost,  
Ere you reach the shore of eternity.

*IF ONLY.*

If only, I  
With folded hands and quiet breast could lie,  
If only o'er these weary eyes would close  
For aye repose;  
And oh, this restless heart that never beat  
In cadence slow and sweet,  
In tune with Time,  
But wildly throbbed and tried to gain  
Release from pain.  
And from the clanking chain  
Of doubts that bound,  
And held it grovelling near the ground,  
When it would soar to spirit heights sublime.  
Oh were it free,  
Oh could it give one mighty throb and break,  
How would the prisoned life within awake,  
To better being and no more restrained;  
No more by low debasing things detained,  
Reach upward to the throne of Thought,  
Where sits the Master Mind,  
And reigns o'er all the wisdom of the spheres.

*A REVERIE.*

O hills that lie like clouds against the summer sky;  
O winds that blow from gardens where exotics grow;  
O fragrance-freighted breeze soft sighing 'mong the trees;  
O fragile flow'ret pure from dangers all secure,  
    Low blooming on the shady valley's side.  
O brooks that gladly go with never ceasing flow  
    Through flowery fields and meadows green and wide.

What tender, tender things each bird in summer sings,  
Of love and beauty rare, and nestlings watched with  
    care;  
Of soft clouds rolling high within the deep blue sky.  
Of waves that break and break, in caves where echoes  
    wake.

Of mystery, hope, joy and love, they sing,  
But most of liberty of hearts unsoiled and free,  
    Of soul with soul in sweetest communing.

These were my thoughts one day, as on I took my way;  
All things so beauteous seemed, I almost thought I  
    dreamed,  
Or walked through groves enchanted by fairy fingers  
    planted,



Where unto men is given a foretaste ~~brief~~ of Heaven,  
A fleet but almost perfect happiness.  
And as I onward went, the happy hours I spent  
Shall always live my memory to bless.

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*TO MRS. M.*

A charming sprite with footsteps bent  
Forever with a good intent,  
    Roams o'er our weary earth.  
And ever as she walks, her hands  
Fulfill the many sweet commands  
    Of Love and Peace and Mirth.  
Our aching brows her kisses calm;  
    Her words our wounded spirits heal.  
She brings some mitigative balm  
    For every misery we feel.  
No paths for her too lowly seem;  
    She smiles upon the darkest days.  
Through every mist her bright eyes gleam  
    And meet our longing gaze.  
Her name is Friendship, and the tie  
    She ever weaves 'twixt man and man  
Is holiest, and can never die  
    If it in truth and faith began.  
But semblances we often find,  
    Ties seemingly by Friendship's wove,  
But by Deception's wily mind,  
    They're formed but to betray our love.

May none such ever 'round your heart  
Be twined by false hands as a snare,  
But Friendship's own, of truth a part,  
May they be found forever there.

*LONGING.*

Oft in life comes an unhappiness,  
Yet from nor remorse nor woe,  
But from longing, yearning after  
Fairer paths than those we know.

Seeing in the far, dim distance,  
Ideal roses, thornless, sweet,  
Scorning all the humbler flowers  
Growing near about our feet.

I have seen these blooms ideal.  
Longed to gather for mine own  
All their beauty, all their fragrance,  
O'er the paths where they have grown.

Longed to turn my restless footsteps,  
Longed to feast my aching eyes,  
With a look that should be something  
More than just a sweet surprise.

But it brought me naught but sorrow,  
All this longing, all this care,  
All this thinking that to-morrow  
Than to-day would be more fair.

Now with willing hand and footsteps,  
Hasten I to pluck the flowers  
Growing in my present pathway,  
Blooming in the present hours.











